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SKETCHES OF THE LIFE OF

GEN. LEWIS CASS.

(CONTINUED.)

In 1831, Gen. Cass was called by Gen. Jackson to take charge of the War Department, and his removal from Michigan Territory was marked by a universal expression of regret. His colleagues in the Cabinet were—Mr Livingston, Mr. McLane, Mr. Woodbury, and Mr. Taney—men who possessed the confidence of the President, and soon acquired that of the country. The characteristic traits of Gen. Jackson's administration have now passed into history. It was bold, prompt, honest, and national. It sought no dangerous constructive powers, and it endeavored carefully to exercise those of which it was the trustee, for the American Confederation. The great questions of the banks, of the removal of the deposite, of nullification, of the French indemnity, and of the Creek and Cherokee difficulties—three of which involved delicate points connected with State rights—occupied its attention, and were all happily disposed of. Few, if any, now call in question the wisdom of Gen. Jackson's course upon these important subjects, though it is now difficult to realize the intense anxiety they excited, and the momentous consequences which hung upon their decision. So far as the War Department necessarily took any immediate course in these questions, it was prompt and energetic. At the portentious period of nullification, the military orders were firm, but discreet, and it appeared by a message from the President, in answer to a call upon that subject, that no order had been at any time given to "resist the constituted authorities of the State of South Carolina, within the chartered limits of said State." The orders to Gen. Scott informed him, that, "should, unfortunately, a crisis arise, when the ordinary power in the hands of the civil officers should not be sufficient for the execution of the laws, the President wo'd determine the course to be taken, and the measures to be adopted; till then he was prohibited from acting:"

The same caution marked the order to the troops when there seemed to be danger of a collision with the authorities of Alabama, arising out of occurrences upon the lands of the United States in that State. In proof of this, we quote the following extract of a letter from the War Department, written by Gen. Cass, to Maj Mc Intosh, and dated Oct. 29, 1833.

"SIR:—Your letter of the 21st inst., to Maj. Gen. Macomb, has been laid before me, and in answer, I have to inform you that you will interpose no obstacle to the service of legal process upon any officer or soldier under your command, whether issuing from the Courts of the State of Alabama, or of the United States. On the contrary, you will give all necessary facilities to the execution of such process It is not the intention of the President that any part of the military force of the United States should be brought into collision with the civil authority. In all questions of jurisdiction, it is the duty of the former to submit to the latter, and no considerations must interfere with that duty. If, therefore, an officer of the State, or of the United States, come with legal process against yourself, or an officer or soldier of your garrison, you will freely admit him within your post, and allow him to execute his writ undisturbed."

In 1837, Gen. Cass was appointed minister to France, and immediately resigned his post as Secretary of War On retiring from the Department, he received a letter from Gen. Jackson, expressing warm personal feelings towards him, and commending his whole official conduct. He sailed from New York in the month of October. As diplomatic relations had not been fully re-established with France, he was directed to proceed to England, and there ascertain the views of the French Government. He found that a French minister had been appointed to this country, and he immediately repaired to Paris and took up his residence there. After his recognition, his first official duty was to procure the interest due upon the twenty-five millions of francs indemnity, which had been retained when the principal was paid. After some hesitation this was effected; and thus this great controversy, which at one time threatened such grave consequences, was happily closed.

After his return to Paris, Gen. Cass resumed the duties of his mission, and continued in their regular execution till its termination. He was proverbial for his kindness and hospitality to his countrymen, none of whom were denied his attentions, and few of whom visited Paris without being invited to his house. His observations on the Government and people of France were given to the public in the pages of the Democratic Review, in an article entitled "France, its King, Court and Government," which most of our readers will probably recollect. Among other literary papers he published in this country, was one upon the French tribunals of justice, which contained much information interesting to an American, and in which the author expressed his decided condemnation of the English common law, looking upon it as a code originating in feudal and almost semi-barbarous times and utterly unsuited to our condition and institutions.

In 1841, arose the well known question of the quintuple treaty, in which Gen Cass acted a prominent and an efficient part. The British Government, in its scheme of maritime superiority, which it never abandons, any more than its plans of territorial aggrandizement, projected a plan, by which, under the pretence of abolishing the slave trade, her ships of war would have been enabled to search and examine, and ultimately to seize the vessels of other nations, at their pleasure. This plan was to form a treaty, to which the five great powers of Europe should be parties, by which means a new principle to the law of nations would be established, and our flag, among others, prostrated at the feet of England. This treaty was negotiated and actually signed by the ministers of the five powers—those of England, France, Russia, Prussia and Austria—before the nature of the transaction was fully understood by the world. It became disclosed before the ratifications were exchanged with the French Government.—Gen. Cass published a pamphlet, which entered deeply into the whole matter and which was translated into French and German, and extensively circulated upon the Continent. It awakened the public attention, and created a great sensation even in England. The London Times, in announcing it, said:

"It is a shrewd performance, written with some spirit, much bold assertion of facts, and a very audacious unfairness of argument, which is rather amusing, when contrasted with a certain tone of gentlemanly candor, which is occasionally adopted even in the very act of performing some of his most glaring perversions."

In addition, also, to the pamphlet, he presented a protest to the French Government against the ratification of the treaty In doing this, he stated that he had no instructions to pursue such a course, and adds:

"I have presumed, in the views I have submitted to you, (M Guizot, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs) that I express the feelings of the American Government and people. If in this I have deceived myself, the responsibility will be mine.—As soon as I can receive despatches from the United States, in answer to my communications, I shall be enabled to declare to you, either that my conduct has been approved by the President, or that my mission is terminated."

But he did not deceive himself. His course was warmly applauded by the American people, who are ever alive to national interests and honor, and coldly approved by the Government.

The following short extract will exhibit the spirit which pervaded this memorable paper:

"But the subject assumes another aspect, when they (the American people) are told by one of the parties, that their vessels are to be forcibly entered and examined, in order to carry into effect these stipulations. Certainly, the American Government does not believe that the high powers, contracting parties to this treaty, have any wish to compel the United States, by force, to adapt their measures to its provisions, or to adopt its stipulations.—They have too much confidence in their sense of Justice to fear any such result: and they will see with pleasure the prompt disavowal made by yourself, sir, in the name of your country, at the tribune of the Chamber of Deputies, of any intentions of this nature. But were it otherwise, and were it possible they might be deceived in this confident expectation, that would not alter in one tittle their course of action. Their duty would be the same, and the same would be their determination to fulfil it. They would prepare themselves, with apprehension indeed, but without dismay—with regret, but with firmness—for one of those desperate struggles which have sometimes occurred in the history of the world; but where a just cause and the favor of Providence have given strength to comparative weakness and enabled it to break down the pride of power."

The success of this scheme, so long cherished and so long projected on the part of England, turned upon the ratification of France. With it she could hope to establish this new principle in maritime law, and with that attain her darling object of maritime supremacy. But the opposition of two such commercial nations as the United States and France to this interpolation, would have rendered hopeless its general recognition. Hence her efforts to accomplish this measure; and as, for more than half a century, she had not failed in any great object of her policy, her pride and interest were equally united in this. Her journals, therefore, were filled with the subject. It occupied the attention of her Government, her people and her press; and her diplomatic agents through Europe were active and persevering. While the subject was under discussion in the French Chamber of Deputies, the eyes of Europe were directed to Paris, anxiously watching the result. That result was soon manifested. The public opinion of France spoke too loudly to be resisted. The Government gave way, and refused to ratify the treaty negotiated under its direction, and signed by its own Minister. The part which Gen. Cass bore in this transaction is well understood and appreciated by his countrymen; and if any doubt existed on the subject, it would have been removed by the abuse heaped upon him in the English journals, and by the declaration of Lord Palmerston, in the House of Commons, that his efforts contributed in a great degree to the rejection of the measure.

An American writing from Europe, in Niles Register, March, 1842, says:

"Gen. Cass has hastily prepared a pamphlet setting forth the true import and dangers of this treaty. It will be read by every statesman in Europe; and, added to the General's personal influence here, will effectually turn the tables on England. The country owes the General much for his effectual influence with this Government."

The London Times, of January 5, 1842, says:

"The five Powers which signed the late treaty for the suppression of the slave trade, will not allow themselves to be thwarted in the execution of this arrangement by the capricious resistance of the Cabinet of Washington."

It is not a little curious, in reading over the papers relating to this transaction, to see how some of the party journals of the day in the United States censured the minister for his interference in foreign concerns; and foretold, very confidently, that he would be rebuked by the French Government. And the London Times of May 16, 1842, states, with apparent exultation, that the venerable patriot, who has just been called from among us, (Mr. Adams.) said in Congress, that he regretted Gen. Cass

"Should have so completely forgotten the wholesome rules of the founders of his country, as to interfere, without instructions from his Government, in a delicate negotiation between the great Powers of Europe.'

This "delicate negotiation" directly involved one of the most precious rights of the United States—that of sailing the ocean undisturbed and in peace. To prevent the consummation of such a project, was not to interfere with other nations, but to prevent other nations from interfering with us. As to the French Government, it took no such view of the matter. The answer of M. Guizot to Gen. Cass, was in a very good spirit, and exhibited the best feeling to the U. States. He stated that the treaty had not been ratified, and disavowed all designs of doing anything whatever unfriendly to the United States.

On the 17th of September following this transaction, the news of the ratification of the Ashburton treaty reached Paris, and Gen. Cass immediately resigned.—His reasons for so doing, we gather from the following extracts of letters to Mr. Webster:

"It is unnecessary to push these considerations further; and in carrying them thus far, I have found the task an unpleasant one. Nothing but justice to myself could have induced me to do it. I could not clearly explain my position here without recapitulation. My protest of 13th February, distinctly asserted that the United States would resist the pretension of England to search our vessels. I avowed, at the same time, that this was but my personal declaration, liable to be confirmed or disavowed by the Government. I now find a treaty has been concluded between Great Britain and the United States, which provides for the co operation of the latter in efforts to abolish the slave trade, but which contains no renunciation by the former of the extraordinary pretensions, resulting as she said, from the exigencies of these very efforts; and which pretension I felt it my duty to denounce to the French Government. In all this I presume to offer no further judgment than as I am personally affected by the course of the proceeding; and I feel they have placed me in a false position, whence I can escape but by returning home, with the least possible delay. I trust, therefore, that the president will have felt no hesitation in granting me the permission which I asked for."

In December, 1842, Gen. Cass returned to the United States. He was received by the citizens of Boston and New York with every demonstration of respect. His bold stand on the quintuple treaty had excited the feelings of the people in his favor, and he was every where hailed as the champion of the freedom of the seas and the rights of American citizens. At New York he was addressed upon political subjects, to which he furnished a brief reply, stating his unshaken attachment to the principles of the Democratic party, and his hostility to a national bank. On his route to the West, he was received at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and Columbus, Ohio, by the Governors and Legislatures of those States, who came out to meet him and escorted him to their towns. At Detroit, the Governor, Legislature, city authorities and people came out to welcome him home, as children welcome the return of a long absent father. On the 8th of January, he was addressed by a committee of the Democratic State Convention of Indiana, upon political questions to which he replied at length, declaring himself against a national bank, opposed to the distribution of the proceeds of the public lands, opposed to a tariff for protection, "that the revenue should be kept to the lowest point compatible with the performance of its constitutional functions," and opposed to altering the Constitution by abolishing the Executive veto; that he should not be a candidate for the Presidency unless nominated at the Baltimore Convention, and that he would support the nominee of that Convention.

[*To be Continued.*]

Baltimore Convention.

We extract the following from the proceedings of the Baltimore Convention:

After the nomination of General Cass, Mr. Dickinson having obtained the consent of the house to speak, then appeared on the stand, and was received with loud applause. He said that he had occupied in his life some strange positions, but the present was one entirely new. It had not been the custom of New York to speak with a forked tongue, but the convention had driven them to it. He would then be compelled to speak as an individual. He and his associates had not looked on without interest at the glorious work of that convention. Had the delegation with which he was associated thrown firebrands into the convention? ("No!" "no!") No. When struck down, she had gone, like the striken deer, to brood over her wounded honor. He and his associates set up no invidious test.—They presented principles dear to all democrats throughout the land. On that account, one set of men went out in the spirit of faction—raised the standard of disorganization—and now refused to submit to that convention, asserting principles to which the democracy could not subscribe. Yet those whom he represented had been placed on the same footing with them! The convention had seen little of that of which he had seen much. It had tasted a little of that of which he and his associates had been compelled to drink to the very dregs. But he did not presume to utter complaints. To those who had stood by them, he said "God speed!" The honorable speaker went on to speak of the injustice of subjecting the democracy of New York to a Procrustean standred.

Mr. Pratt of Vermont, Mr. McCandless of Pennsylvania, and others, rose to order and insisted that the gentleman postpone his remarks, and allow the convention to proceed to the nominations

The Chair reminded gentlemen that the gentleman from New York had obtained leave to address the house.

Mr. Dickinson proceeded. He hoped that his brethren would allow him to go on. New York had sat four days in that convention, and he wanted to know if they would hear what her vote would have been, had they been admitted as the rightful delegates? (A voice Lewis Cass—thirty-six, and the rest naught! [Laughter, and great applause.] He reminded them that the little State which he represented lies next to Vermont, contained a few millions of people, and it could be found upon the map! [Laughter and applause.] He was here in 1835, with the privilege of voting, and speaking, too, if he desired; and that was the first time that he had seen the venerable face of the president of the convention. [Applause.] He and his friends had been accused of being opposed to Mr. Van Buren. (A Voice That's right!") [Much laughter.] He denied that they were opposed to Mr. Van Buren or that illustrious man Silas Wright; and proceeded to condemn the action of the convention which had attempted to make both delegations walk together.

Mr. Wright, of New Jersey, asked the gentleman to give way a moment till he made a suggestion.

Mr. Dickinson said he would give way but not yield the floor.

Mr. Wright then remarked that the other delegation had withdrawn, in order not to embarass the convention; and in his opinion the course and remarks of the gentleman from New York, who was now addressing the convention, were not well calculated to promote conciliation, [Cries of "order," applause, and disapprobation.]

Some confusion occurred—several members rising to leave the house, and many insisting that the balloting for Vice President should proceed, whilst many others were equally strenuous in their demands that the gentleman from New York should proceed.

At length the Chair obtained order and

Mr. Dickinson proceeded. New York had been kept dancing attendance for four days, and surely they would not now refuse to hear a few words in explanation from her. [Applause.] In the protest of the gentleman who had retired from the convention, they had designated themselves as thirty-six estimable young men. Certainly, they were very modest. Their modesty almost equalled that of the Miletian virgins, who said they would have committed suicide, but for the fear of the exposure of their bodies after death.

Mr. Ingersoll, of Connecticut, here rose and suggested that the gentleman was not in order.

The Chair overruled the point of order, and requested the gentleman from New York to proceed.

Mr. Dickinson resumed. The gentlemen said they were peculiar friends of Silas Wright; but he contended that they had been among the worst foes of that distinguished man. They wept over his tomb very much in the spirit of Henry over that of Thomas a Beckett. [Here there were cries of "order," and confusion.] Won't you hear some plain talk from us? said the honorable speaker.—Don't you want to have us committed to your nominations? [Applause, and cries of "yes, yes."] We tell you that so far as we can do anything, we will be first and last, earliest and latest, not only in the advocacy of the nominees, but of the great standard principles which you may erect here. [Applause.] I beg you, then to be patient. You must place us in the best position you can. Let me tell you that we have no disguises, and that we are no disorganizers. We have a pure and holy faith in democratic principles, second only to that which we have in Him who spoke as never man spoke.—We set up no new tests—no brazen serpents, by which any portion of the Union may be healed; but as one great family, we desire all to sit down at the same table of equality. (Applause.) We do not believe that one State should dictate institutions or principles to another. We do not believe that Massachusetts, or New York, or South Carolina, or any State, should dictate whether other members of the confedracy should have polygamy, or celibacy, or slavery, or any other institution. [Applause.] Have you not now a platform—in the erection of which I had myself an humble share—sufficiently broad on which all can stand? Let us meet upon common ground, and where we cannot agree, let us merge minor differences in a great common cause, I am glad that you now give me your attention. This is no unimportant matter, and it is certainly best for us to be good-natured all round. I think you must admit that we have kept our temper pretty well. [Laughter and applause.] As to your nominee, there is not amongst mankind whom I would prefer. He was our first, our last, our only choice.—[Applause.] I know him to be a great and good man. I have traced his career from the earliest period. I know him to be not only a wise statesman and an accomplished scholar, but one of the kindest and most warm-hearted of men, taking the young men of the country by the hand, and leading them to such honorable stations as their merits may cammand. I know that he has no narrow prejudices—no sectional feelings. He stands on the broad platform of the constitution. He is the champion of free trade, freedom of opinion, and freedom of the seas. [Great applause.] He is the man who can rally the democracy of all parts of the Union. Once for all, let me tell you that we will sustain, with all our energies, the nominees of this convention. I know you are anxious to proceed to a nomination for Vice-President, and I shall not longer trespass on your patience. Proceed to your nomination. Select your candidate from the East, the West, the North, or the South—all we ask is, that he be a sterling democrat. And now, fellow-citizens, I give you the right hand of fellowship. Good bye! [Loud and continued applause.]

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After the transaction of the usual closing business of the convention, a motion to adjourn *sine die* prevailed.

Before announcing the result of the vote on adjournment, the venerable Chairman Mr. Stevens, rose and thus addressed the convention:

GENTLEMEN: We have discharged the duty which we came here to perform, and we are now about to separate and return to our homes. That separation will be with many for years, and, with many more, forever! Let us separate in peace and harmony. Let us carry with us no unkind feeling, but go forth as becomes the democracy of the Union, inspired by one common feeling—fraternal esteem. [Loud applause.] In separating from you, I bid you farewell, and tender to all, collectively and individually, my sincere wishes for your prosperity and happiness I congratulate you and the country upon the issue of your deliberations. I rejoice that you have done that which I knew you would do—honored yourselves, honored the party, honored the country, by presenting two candidates worthy—most worthy—to fill these high and distinguished stations. [Applause.] Gentlemen, you have discharged that duty. With one of these nominees, I have been intimate from early life. I know him well. I have observed him at home and abroad; and I can say, unhesitatingly, that if there be one man of stainless character—if there be one man whose claims to public confidence are founded upon private virtue, that man is LEWIS CASS. [Tremendous.] With the other distinguished individual, it is not my happiness personally to be acquainted; but I take him because he is your choice.—His merits no democrat in the Union will be disposed to question. Though not in the councils of the nation, he has performed no mean part in the defence of its liberties; and with the names of Cass and Butler upon your broad and bright democratic flag, you will march to victory. [Long continued applause.] I congratulate you and the country upon the proceedings of yesterday. I wish to God that every man and woman—yes, every woman, for how can we defend our lib-